

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Some things churches cannot do in political process

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — With the 1988 elections just a few weeks off, a Baptist church-state attorney has reminded churches to avoid partisan political activity that could jeopardize their tax-exempt status.

Oliver S. Thomas, general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, has pointed out the Internal Revenue Code prohibits all tax-exempt organizations, including churches, from participating in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for elective public office.

Thomas said if a church wishes to avoid jeopardizing its tax-exempt status, it should follow several basic principles:

- Do not endorse a candidate for elective public office directly or indirectly, whether through a sermon, church newsletter or sample ballot.

- "Statements supporting or opposing a candidate must be avoided," Thomas wrote in the article published in the Sept. 88 issue of *Report from the Capital*. "In addition, churches should avoid using pejorative or inflammatory labels when mentioning a candidate by name."

- If a church official endorses a candidate without the congregation's authorization, he added, the church should issue a disclaimer in the same forum, indicating the official's statement does not reflect the church's views.

- Do not provide financial or other support to a campaign for elective office.

- A tax-exempt organization may not provide financial support for any candidate, political party, or political action committee, Thomas said. It also may not provide volunteers, mailing lists, publicity, or free use of facilities unless those facilities are made available on an equal basis to all other parties and candidates in the community, he said.

- Do not distribute or display cam-

paign literature on church premises.

Churches should not give permission to individual members to distribute campaign literature before or after services, except in the setting of a public forum or debate where all candidates are given an opportunity to state their views and distribute their literature, Thomas wrote.

- Do not organize, establish, or support a political action committee.

While individual members of a congregation may establish a PAC for the support of a particular party or candidate, he said, the church may not support the PAC or provide a platform for its particular political views.

"The list of prohibited activities almost can be summarized in a single sentence: You may talk about issues but not about individual parties or candidates," Thomas wrote.

On the other hand, he said, churches may conduct a number of legitimate voter education activities without jeopardizing their tax-exempt status.

Those activities include:

- Distributing voting records of legislators or members of Congress that indicate no bias for or against a particular member. Statements that the legislator agrees or disagrees with the church's position on particular issues likely would be considered biased, he said.

- "Unfortunately, the IRS has indicated that bias may exist where the organization targets a narrow range of issues and distributes the publication broadly beyond its own membership," he added. "If, for example, the only issue listed is abortion and the publication is widely distributed during the campaign, it is likely to be considered biased."

- Polling all candidates through an unbiased questionnaire that covers a wide range of issues.

Generally, Thomas wrote, a candidate questionnaire will not be considered biased if the questions are

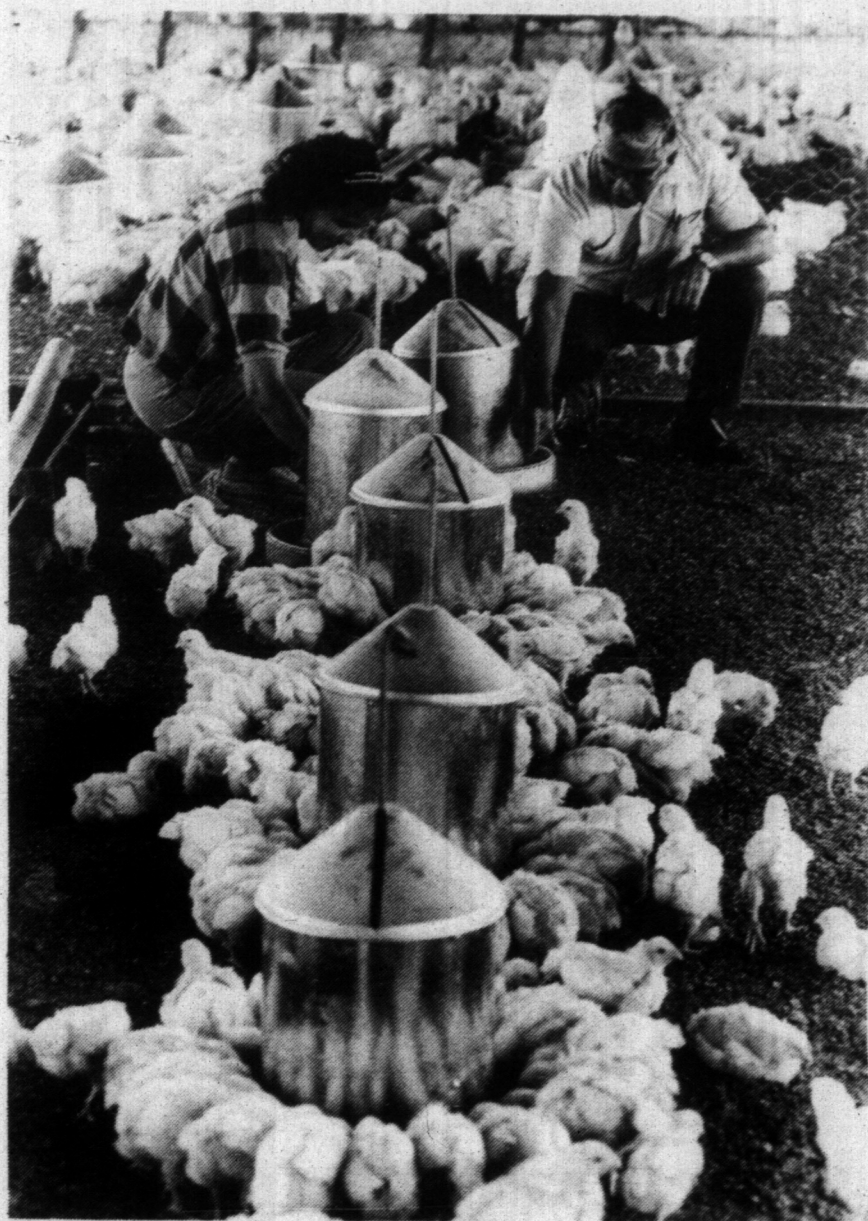
worded fairly, a wide range of issues is covered, and the results are reported in a fair and objective manner.

- Sponsoring public forums, debates, and lectures during which all candidates are allowed to state their views and/or field questions.

"While the minister is free to participate in the political process, he or she must be careful to avoid the appearance of speaking or acting on behalf of the church," Thomas said. "When campaigning for or against a candidate, the minister should avoid being introduced in his official capacity. If mention is made of his church, it should be accompanied by a disclaimer that makes clear that the affiliation is listed for identification purposes only and that the minister is not acting on behalf of the church."

"Separating the minister's role as an individual voter from his role as a church leader is always difficult, particularly in the context of religious services or rallies. For that reason, a minister should never endorse a candidate from the pulpit, even though he might insist that he is speaking in his individual capacity."

Kathy Palen writes for the Baptist Joint Committee.



"Living water" fights hunger

Southern Baptists have set aside Oct. 9 this year as World Hunger Sunday. Missionaries throughout the world are working in various ways to alleviate hunger. In this photo Southern Baptists missionary Bruce Oliver and animal scientist Elisa Queiros inspect a poultry section of a model farm in Brazil. The farm is part of Southern Baptists' \$3 million, five-year Living Water Project to rescue thousands of starving Brazilians from the effects of a long drought. Through the project farmers have introduced a dozen vegetable varieties into their fields. "Living Water" also includes medical care, vocational classes, and seminary extension classes. (FMB) PHOTO By Don Rutledge

Getting married? Talk things over first

By Terri Lackey

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Engaged people who want to discover secrets about their future mates before they are married need only attend a few sessions of premarital counseling, two counselors agreed. "Premarital counseling (or 'engaged couple enrichment') opens lines of communication and allows couples to talk about things they otherwise might not discuss," said Ron Mumbower, minister of counseling and family life at First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss.

Among the most important discoveries a couple will make is the 'family system' each comes from, agreed Mumbower and Stanley J. Watson, professor emeritus of psychology and marriage and family counseling at New Orleans Seminary. Both led seminars at the Sept. 23-25 Fall Festival of Marriage in New Orleans.

"The home is the training ground of relationships. You really get a concept of relationships by watching your parents," Mumbower said. "A person usually imitates how he saw mom and dad interact, communicate, show love and deal with conflict."

Watson, now living in Picayune, Miss., said people come from one of four family types — traditional, enmeshed, individualistic or companionship.

In a traditional family, one person — the mother or father — makes the decisions for the family, Watson said. In the enmeshed family, "each person is controlling and critical of the others."

In an individualistic system, everybody makes decisions for themselves; and in a companionship family, all members work together as partners in the decision

In premarital counseling, it is important to help couples realize their family backgrounds and point out how each person is likely to react to the other's handling of family matters, Mumbower said.

"We like to help couples realize the potential dysfunction and take them and create new ground for a new system," he said. "When two people from different backgrounds come together, it can become a conflict right away."

While individual partners may not choose to change their ways, counseling enables each to become aware of the other's background, Mumbower said. He added he believes the comfortable environment of counseling brings out many issues couples might have not talked about earlier in their relationship — family systems, personality, communication, conflict resolution, sexual understanding and money matters.

"The expectations of marriage and the other person is also usually discussed," said Mumbower. "But when we ask couples to visualize what they want in a partner, most have never thought about it. They just believe they want this person sitting beside them."

"That's part of what counseling is about — making the person aware of what they are about to do, so they will not enter the relationship blindly."

About 300 people attended the marriage conference, sponsored jointly by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department, the Mississippi and Louisiana Baptist conventions and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Terry Lackey writes for the Sunday School Board.

Robinson Street Church lives on in missions gift

As of June 30, the Mississippi Baptist Foundation had disbursed a total of \$34,597.83 through the trust agreement of Robinson Street Baptist Church in Jackson.

A year ago, the church closed its doors, selling its property and giving the proceeds to the cause of missions.

The total given was \$591,874.47 with interest earned to be given to Mississippi College, the Baptist Children's Village, the Mississippi Baptist Student Union, and Hinds-

Madison Associational mission work through Crestwood Baptist Center.

Mississippi College received \$10,077.83 for scholarship aid for needy students preparing for Christian ministry.

The Village received \$6,093.57 for aid to children in its care.

Mississippi BSU programs received \$3,046.80 to provide interns in BSU work.

And Crestwood Center received \$4,218.63 to help needy people in greater Jackson area.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

It hurts to be hungry

I have been hungry. I have been so hungry that I couldn't think about anything else but something to eat. I have experienced the hunger that comes from losing 50 pounds from a 150-pound frame because of not having enough to eat.

So I am familiar with hunger. When I declare that steps need to be taken to deal with worldwide hunger, I know the experience of hunger.

I never knew it until I lived in a prisoner of war camp, however, and I haven't known it since. I knew then that if I could exist long enough, I would be back eventually where I wouldn't have to worry about hunger any more.

Oct. 9 is World Hunger Day. It is an

emphasis sponsored by the Mississippi Christian Action Commission and by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. Offerings will be taken all across the nation to relieve hunger all over the world.

There is a lot of hunger. News releases are telling of new pockets of hunger with regularity. Several nations in Africa are battling hunger daily and have been doing so for years. The people in those nations don't have the hope that I had. They don't have any hope that their hunger will ever go away.

It seems strange that the world food distribution is so lopsided. While we eat all we want and then waste a lot, there are people all over the world

who could subsist on what we throw away.

A lot of those people live in the United States.

Southern Baptist world hunger funds are administered by our two missions boards. There are no administrative expenses to take out. They have already been paid through the Cooperative Program and the two missions offerings.

So this is a call for churches to take an offering for world hunger on Sunday and a call for church members to give liberally.

Give to alleviate world hunger any time, but be especially generous Sunday.

It hurts to be hungry.

I know what I'm talking about.

Guest opinion . . .

Japan cool, but pastor warm

By Herb Hollinger

There is a distinct coolness to Christianity in Japan. Where there has been outbreaks of revivals in other nations over the years, Japan has seemed to be very resistant to the gospel, probably, for a myriad of reasons.

But one of the most beautiful examples of love and commitment I have ever heard about came from a Japanese pastor and deacons from the church he served.

We were visiting missionary friends in the Tokyo area some years ago. My missionary friend told me I could preach in this particular church in a suburb of Tokyo with him as an interpreter. I jumped at the chance; and even though the Japanese culture is so very different from ours, I really enjoyed the experience.

The pastor was a delightful and very warm person. In the ensuing conversations it became evident he would like to come to America for a visit. At that time the church where I was a member had a Japanese mission; and I assured him the mission would love to hear him, as well as the Anglo congregation.

It was all set for the following summer. But it didn't happen. He didn't come.

At first I was puzzled, and then I learned why. During that year, and maybe even further back, the church treasurer had embezzled more than \$50,000 from the church's funds, I think from a future building fund.

I don't know what happened to the church treasurer. But the pastor and deacons got together, spent much time and agony in prayer, and then decided. They decided "they" would come up with the lost money!

That's right. The pastor and the deacons, from their own personal accounts, came up with the money so the church wouldn't be penalized by the treasurer's transgression.

As a result, the Japanese pastor did not have the money to come to the U.S. for his vacation that next summer.

My understanding is that the church, led by the pastor and deacons, forgave the treasurer and extended to him and his family love and forgiveness.

This is a short version of the incident but the truth is still there: when a pastor, the spiritual leader of that local congregation of God's people,

leads by example, then a mighty revival can begin.

Japan may be "cool" to the gospel in so many ways right now, but I know if the Japanese ever "catch" the love and commitment of this Japanese pastor and deacons, that coolness will turn to red-hot fire for the Lord. Just like a huge fire can start with one match, God can take one example of his love and make it the spark of a huge revival and renewal for any people.

That's my prayer for the Japanese people as well as here at home.

Herb Hollinger is editor of The California Southern Baptist.

China province restores Lottie Moon's church

PENGLAI, China (BP) — Authorities in China's Shandong Province have completed the restoration of a historic church where famed Southern Baptist missionary Lottie Moon worked and worshiped.

China International Travel Service officials recognized the crumbling church's historical value and reportedly spent thousands of dollars refurbishing it. Located in Penglai, formerly Tengchow, the church has become one of the most popular stops on China tours sponsored by the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

The restoration began last year. Work crews cleaned the premises, repaired the interior and exterior

walls, floor, ceiling, and entrance gate, painted the building, and installed new pews.

The "Little Crossroads" church was built by Southern Baptist missionary T.P. Crawford in the late 1860s and is one of the oldest Baptist structures still standing in China. During much of the next century, it played host to most of the Chinese Baptist pastors and missionaries in the region, including Moon, who lived near the church for many of her nearly 40 years in China.

The church was closed and fell into disrepair after the Japanese occupied the region in 1937. It probably never reopened as a church after

World War II. Shandong remained closed to most foreigners until the last few years.

A group of Southern Baptists visited Penglai and the church in 1985. Behind the crumbling outer wall in front of the empty sanctuary, they found a small stone monument to Moon toppled over in the trash-strewn courtyard.

Their visit and others sparked renewed interest in the historic building among local Christians as well as government officials.

More than 100 Christian families, most formerly related to Baptist and Presbyterian traditions, live in Penglai. Some now worship in home

meetings.

But restoration of the old Baptist structure, the only church building still standing in Penglai, has raised expectations that it will once again become an active house of worship — this time for all the Christians in town.

"We are so glad that the good news of the gospel will again be proclaimed in this old church after such a long time," said one elderly believer who was baptized 63 years ago by Southern Baptist missionary Wiley B. Glass.

The church is not yet open for worship, but a recent group of foreign visitors was told it will open within the next six months.

"But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind . . ."
(Luke 14:13, RSV)



Observe World Hunger Day
October 9, 1988

Sponsored by the Christian Life Commission
of the Southern Baptist Convention

Be sure to vote

Every two years for the House of Representatives, every four years for the presidency, and every six years for senators we hold elections. It is the exercise that celebrates our freedom.

For the system to work, however, we have to vote. Voting is a patriotic duty.

We don't always like the possibilities, but we must vote anyway. Somehow, those possibilities are the

result of either our lack of action or the fact that somebody else outdid us. So we must try to sort out the values and vote as we feel it is best to do.

To be at its best, America must be a reflection of its people. That cannot be unless its people vote.

Nov. 8 is national election day. Let's be sure the voting booth is on our itinerary for the day.

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Abuse, pornography, addiction seminar topics

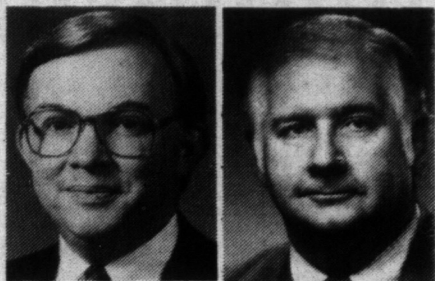
"Problems People Face: Rethinking Our Options" is the theme for the Christian Action Commission seminar to be held at Calvary Church, Tupelo, beginning Oct. 13, at 2 p.m., and concluding Oct. 14, at 11:30 a.m. The seminar will feature authorities on the subjects of child abuse, pornography, and human addiction.

Sue Hathorn, executive director of the Mississippi Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, will speak on "Child Abuse: A Family Affair" at the Thursday afternoon session which begins at 2 p.m. on Oct. 13.

Larry Braidfoot, general counsel and director of citizenship development for the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, will speak on "Pornography, the Church, and a Free Society." Braidfoot is the author of several books in the areas of pornography, gambling, and related ethical issues and will speak at the Thursday evening session which begins at 7 p.m.

Paul Jones, executive director of the Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, will address the topic "Living in an Addicted Society." He will speak at the final session which begins at 9 a.m., Oct. 14.

Each of the seminar leaders will lead workshops following the main presentations, and all three workshops will be repeated for the



Jones

Braidfoot

convenience of all participants. The topics of the workshops and the presenters are: Sue Hathorn, "Recognizing and Preventing Child Abuse;" Larry Braidfoot, "Confronting Pornography: Dealing with Smut;" Paul Jones, "Drugs and Alcohol: Options and Answers."

There is no charge for the seminar. Additional information may be secured from William Smith, director of missions, Lee County Baptist Association, Box 133, Tupelo, MS 38802, phone — 842-8164, or the Christian Action Commission, Mississippi Baptist Convention, phone 968-3800.

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Carey trustees vote to retire Noonkester

By Tim Nicholas

In a closed meeting last Thursday, William Carey College trustees voted not to renew President Ralph Noonkester's contract past his 65th birthday next June. Noonkester has been president of Carey since 1956.

They also voted to name a presidential search committee to be composed of five members of the trustees, and one each elected from the facul-

ty and student body.

The vote came following a policy change which reflected federal law and included making extended employment of the president beyond age 65 a contract matter to be renewed yearly. Trustees then closed the meeting to the president and administrators.

At that time the trustees voted 5-4 not to renew Noonkester's contract next year. According to trustee John Thomas of Hattiesburg, those voting not to renew were Wiley Abel, Hattiesburg; Dennis Johnsey, Pascagoula; Tommy King, Columbia; Dwight Smith, Ellisville; and David Spencer, Long Beach. Those voting to renew were Andy Carpenter, Biloxi; Elise Curtis, Collins; Joe Dale, Prentiss; and Thomas. Those four left the meeting after the vote. Chairman Billy McKay of Belzoni did not vote.

Trustees Lewis Fowler, Hattiesburg; Bob Sigrest, Jackson; and Beth (Mrs. Owen) Cooper, Yazoo City, were absent. Two trustees recently left the board. David Lee moved to Maryland and Bill Ray resigned because of lack of liability insurance for board members.

Trustees gave no reason for not renewing Noonkester's contract. When called into the meeting room to be informed of the vote, Noonkester immediately left the meeting and the

campus, making no statement.

In other business, prior to that vote, trustees declined the third administrative reorganization plan proposed within a year by Noonkester. The two other plans had been adopted.

Trustees also heard from auditors who reported that the college at this time is fiscally solvent. Debt levels have increased to \$1,200,000 on the operating debt and in excess of \$6,000,000 on the plan debt. The fund balance shows an increase of \$11,925 to \$110,255.

The group approved a 1988-89 budget of \$6,964,000 plus another \$1 million for debt retirement which Noonkester offered to raise. Trustees also asked for liability insurance for themselves subject to research on its cost.

Contacted the day after the meeting, McKay said that "The school has prospered in years past under his (Noonkester's) leadership numerically and financially, but in recent years William Carey has suffered like almost all institutions across our country and it has been difficult to meet the financial obligations. He has struggled and wrestled with this universal problem to maintain the financial balance."

McKay said that short term credit is difficult at this point for the school. (Continued on page 5)

Gifts total \$14 million

Mississippi Baptists gave \$1,656,092 through the Cooperative Program in September, according to an announcement by Earl Kelly, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Total Cooperative Program giving for the nearly 2,000 Southern Baptist churches in the state for 1988 is \$14,076,175. That averages out to

\$1,564,019 per month.

If that much were given each month for the rest of the year, the total income would be \$18,768,232. That would be \$146,768 under the 1988 budget of \$18,915,000.

The total amount given thus far in 1988 to the unified budget plan for worldwide missions and education is \$346,567 more than that given for the same period in 1987.



Singing Churchmen head for Korea

These Mississippi Singing Churchmen, holding a rehearsal, are headed for South Korea today for the first stop in a singing tour. On invitation of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, the group will perform concerts in universities, churches and high schools in Seoul, Taejon, Pusan, Kyung Ju, Kwang Ju, and in Hong Kong.

Their repertoire will consist of eight songs in Korean, and

14 in English. There will also be solos, duets, and handbell numbers.

A total of 36 singers, pianist, director, and Guy and Lois Henderson are making the trip. The Hendersons are former missionaries to Korea. Henderson is director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Evangelism Department.

Each traveler has his testimony printed in Korean to give out as a witnessing effort.

Non-SBC schools may exhibit at convention

NASHVILLE (BP) — Three non-Southern Baptist Convention-related schools will be given exhibit space at the annual meetings of the SBC under a new exhibit policy adopted during the fall meeting of the SBC Executive Committee.

The schools — Criswell College in Dallas, Luther Rice Seminary in Jacksonville, Fla., and Mid-America Seminary in Memphis, Tenn. — had not been allowed to exhibit at the annual meeting under current policies, which were reaffirmed by the Executive Committee last February.

The schools, however, will be eligible to exhibit on a "space available" basis starting at the 1989 annual meeting in Las Vegas, Nev. Exhibitors pay the cost of their own displays and a cost-recovery fee for space and services, convention officials said, noting no SBC Cooperative Program budget

money will fund the three displays.

The new exhibit policy was one of five actions taken during the Sept. 19-20 meeting of the Executive Committee relating to the annual meeting. The committee also dealt with proposed bylaw changes, funding, the National Day of Prayer, resolutions of appreciation and other matters.

Another action, expected to be discussed during the February 1989 meeting, relates to a resolution concerning objections to a television program by Bill Moyers, "God and Politics," aired on the Public Broadcasting Service.

The new exhibit policy was one of only a few actions discussed during plenary sessions of the Executive Committee, and the only action to draw negative votes.

The policy sets up a three-tiered system that includes primary and (Continued on page 5)

Commission drops AIDS report; member comments on communism

By Marv Knox

NASHVILLE (BP) — The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has stopped distributing the "Surgeon General's Report on AIDS."

The ethics agency voted to pull the AIDS report during its annual meeting here Sept. 13-14.

Commissioners also dropped a pamphlet that favors abolition of capital punishment and heard a warning from a Mississippi Baptist against the way the CLC uses the terms "hunger," "peace," "race relations" and "poverty."

The AIDS report, prepared by U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, had been reprinted and distributed by the CLC in a 28-page booklet.

A CLC-drafted foreword to the booklet says: "Warning! This pamphlet contains explicit language related to physical anatomy and human reproduction and should be used by responsible adults. The CLC has reprinted this report as a service to concerned Christians, not as a guide to Christian morality."

The motion to stop distribution was adopted by the full board without discussion. But Alma Ruth Morgan, a homemaker from Bartlesville, Okla., and the commissioner who made the

motion, told Baptist Press the document is not strong enough.

Koop, a conservative Presbyterian, spoke at the CLC annual seminar in March 1987. In that meeting, he noted his report already had drawn criticism from other conservative Christians, particularly because it called for stepped-up sex education in schools.

But he insisted sex education for young people and AIDS education for the general public is vital: "We must be very clear about this disease in at least two respects. It is spreading among more Americans, and it is killing more Americans as it spreads."

"Our bottom line is there's better material," Morgan said of the decision to drop the report. "We're not knocking Koop. We're going for total abstinence; no pamphlet printed or mailed by the Christian Life Commission should promote anything except sex within marriage."

The Koop report fails because it does not mention morals or a sense of right and wrong and does not define what a sex partner is, she added.

"Also, there is no mention of condom-failure rate," Morgan said. "They are saying now it could be as

high as 30 percent to 50 percent in homosexual activity."

Commissioners believe the surgeon general's report "contains assumptions about sexual morality" and does not reflect "CLC standards concerning heterosexuality and sex within marriage," said Richard Land, newly elected CLC executive director.

Commissioners also were influenced by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's decision not to distribute the report, Land said.

The commissioners instructed the staff "to give information about AIDS included in the surgeon general's report without compromising our position about moral sex being between a man and a woman within marriage," he added.

The capital punishment pamphlet, part of the CLC's "Issues and Answers" series, likewise was pulled from circulation without debate by the full board.

The promotion committee, which has oversight of pamphlet production, proposed that the capital punishment piece be dropped because it urges Southern Baptists to work for the abolition of the death penalty.

"I sympathize with the commis-

sioners' concern," Land told Baptist Press. "Like many Southern Baptists, I was offended by the statement that we should work for the abolition of capital punishment. I don't believe that; I don't believe a majority of Southern Baptists believe that."

"Support for capital punishment as a legitimate option of civil magistrates is not to be equated with unqualified support for capital punishment as it has been applied in our culture," he noted, adding Christians can support the statute while striving to eliminate inconsistencies in its application.

Commissioner Curtis W. Caine Sr., a medical doctor from Jackson, Miss., and a member of First Church there, had a different inconsistency in mind when he warned his colleagues about the use of "traditional words used to deal with programs of this commission."

Speaking of "race relations," Caine said: "We have to be very careful that we do not get caught in the trap that is closing in around us about apartheid in South Africa, which doesn't exist anymore and was beneficial when it did, because it meant separate development."

"We have to be very careful that we don't be caught up in the endorsement of — quote, 'the reverend,' unquote — Martin Luther King." He called the martyred civil rights leader a fraud.

Caine also cautioned against use of the term "world hunger," saying, "Starvation has been used since time immemorial to control people." He cited communist regimes in the Soviet Union and Ethiopia as examples and claimed, "The first communist cell in the U.S. was the U.S. Department of Agriculture."

Of "peace," he said: "If you look in the English/communist dictionary, you see 'peace' means anything that promotes communism . . . Using 'world peace' may be endorsing one world government, . . . one world educational system, . . . one world money and . . . one world atheist religious system."

And of "poverty," he added: "Sometimes Christians who are soft-hearted steal from those who have and give to those who have not. That is not Christian."

Commissioners responded with silence to Caine's discourse. Land later told Baptist Press he believes nobody responded to Caine because commissioners were grieved and embarrassed.

"They were grieved that a commissioner would believe this way and embarrassed that he would say such things," Land said. "It was clear to all commissioners that this is an isolated opinion not shared by anyone on the board."

As proof, he pointed to his 23-2 election the preceding day following his "extremely forthright" statements supporting racial equality. Land added, "We ought to listen to Dr. Caine, to see why he feels that way in order to change his mind."

Stand against racism recited

By Marv Knox

NASHVILLE (BP) — A Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission trustee's recent statements about Martin Luther King Jr. and apartheid have raised questions about the convention's stand against racism, according to the agency's interim executive director.

Curtis W. Caine Sr.'s comments "have raised serious questions about Southern Baptist racial attitudes and actions," wrote Robert Parham in a statement released Sept. 28.

Caine, a medical doctor and member of First Church, Jackson, Miss., made his comments during the commission's annual meeting Sept. 14.

In his announcement, titled "A Statement: Southern Baptists and Race Relations," Parham wrote, "These statements stand in sharp contrast with the accomplishments attained during the previous four decades, have offended many inside and outside the convention, have planted seeds of doubt about the authenticity of the Christian life of Southern Baptists and may prove injurious to the denomination's Christian witness at home and abroad."

Parham conceded Southern Baptist history includes dark days of racial strife. The convention was formed in 1845 by Baptists who felt missionaries should be allowed to own slaves. And many Southern Baptists in this century have agitated for segregation.

"We are a denomination born into a family of slaveholders and nurtured by segregationists," Parham admit-

ted. But he added: "Our heritage has influenced, but has not determined, our present course. We are an imperfect people on pilgrimage out of darkness into newness of life."

"Our tracks disclose where we have been and where we are going:

— "Eighteen Southern Baptist Convention resolutions from 1937 to 1986 have deplored un-Christian racial practices, repudiated groups fomenting racial strife and division, committed ourselves to working against racial injustice and correcting racial inequalities, and called for involvement of blacks and other minorities in the work of the denomination."

— "A Statement Concerning the Crisis in Our Nation" was adopted in 1968 by the SBC, calling for resistance to prejudice, respect for inherent dignity and worth of every individual, affirmation of the equality of human and legal rights for every person and commitment to the pursuit of reconciliation."

— "A Declaration of Human Rights" was adopted in 1978 by the SBC, saying in part: "... Our concern for tortured, unjustly imprisoned and politically oppressed persons abroad is matched by our concern for the rights of women, blacks, ethnic minorities, the poor, the aging, the sick, and abused children in our midst. . . . We are determined to be courageous defenders of human rights who will not be deterred in the fight to make all people free."

— "A Call to Concern about Apartheid," issued unanimously in 1985 by

16 individual Southern Baptist representatives from the Christian Life Commission, Southern Baptist Foundation, Baptist World Alliance, Baptist Sunday School Board, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Home and Foreign mission boards, expressed support for the Baptist Union of Southern Africa, which spoke against the "gross immoralities of apartheid." The 10-point statement added, "We cry for justice for the blacks of South Africa who have been long abused by the oppressive system of institutionalized racism forced on them by the white minority government."

Although Caine's remarks have stirred controversy, Southern Baptists have "a unique opportunity to refocus on the issue of race relations," Parham said. "Out of this, God can work for good through us at a number of points."

"First, we must remember that what takes place in the backyard of our agencies may be seen as national tragedies on the denomination's front porch. What is said in Nashville can be heard and can be harmful around the world."

"Second, we must re-examine our own hearts, seeking to rid them of evil, struggling to understand the words of those who are angry and frightened and searching for ways to be ministers of reconciliation."

"Third, we must recommit ourselves to the elimination of racism and racist structures from Jackson to Johannesburg."

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Non-SBC schools approved to exhibit at convention

(Continued from page 3)
secondary exhibitors, as well as exhibitors sponsored by primary exhibitors.

The most significant change is the set of secondary exhibitors, which includes only Criswell, Luther Rice and Mid-America.

Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, opposed the inclusion of the three non-SBC related schools, calling it divisive. "It seems to me that when the fellowship of the convention is so tentative, this might not be the time to add one more thing that chips away at the cooperative concept," he said.

Gordon Graham, pastor of First Baptist Church of New Braunfels, Texas, and chairman of the administrative and convention arrangements subcommittee, said he believes it "would be divisive if we leave them out," and urged committee members to "allow them in."

Charles Sullivan, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lenoir City, Tenn., and chairman of the Executive Committee, called for a voice vote of those favoring the new policy, and for those who opposed it to raise their hands.

Ten members of the 76-member committee voted against the changes.

In another convention-related matter, the committee selected Dallas as the convention site in 1997; Atlanta in 1999, and New Orleans in 2001. Selections were made so far in advance because of the difficulty in negotiating convention center space on the dates needed, officials said.

Messengers to the 1989 annual meeting must ratify the action.

The committee also declined to act on a motion referred from the 1988 annual meeting suggesting a study of the feasibility of state or regional convention sites. Committee members were told the staff of the Executive

Committee is working with a group of physically handicapped people to better serve the special needs of the physically handicapped.

The committee also voted to refer a motion concerning convention personalities to the 1989 Order of Business Committee. The motion, made at the 1988 annual meeting by Susan Lockwood Wright, pastor of Cornell Avenue Baptist Church in Chicago, recommended "women in church-related vocations be selected to lead worship" at annual meetings and, beginning in 1989, women alternate with men in preaching the convention sermons.

In matters relating to the constitution and bylaws of the SBC, Executive Committee members declined to make changes suggested by motions referred to them during the 1988 annual meeting.

The committee declined to recommend a change in the method whereby Cooperative Program funds are divided between state and national causes. Currently, state conventions vote to determine the percentages that will be kept in the states and shared with national and international ministries.

The motion requested the churches be allowed to set the divisions. The action noted churches always have the right to designate funds as they choose.

The committee also declined to recommend a change in the definition of a cooperating church. A motion referred suggested cooperating churches be required to give at least 5 percent of undesignated funds to the Cooperative Program for five years before being accepted.

A 10-member committee to plan the SBC Sesquicentennial Celebration in 1995 was appointed. Named are John Sullivan, Shreveport, La., chair, and

Minette Drumwright, Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va., vice chair.

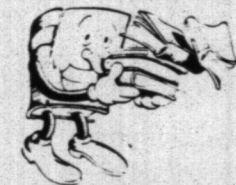
Others are pastors Joel Gregory, Fort Worth, Texas; and Warren Hultgren, Tulsa, Okla.; Mississippi Baptist Convention Executive Director Earl Kelly, Jackson; SBC Historical Commission Executive Director Lynn E. May Jr., Nashville; church history professor H. Leon McBeth, Fort Worth, Texas; former president of the Woman's Missionary Union Dorothy Sample, Flint, Mich.; and the current chairman of the SBC Executive Committee.

A resolution expressing concern over the PBS program concerning the Southern Baptist Convention was referred to the Public Relations Workgroup for study and a report back to the Feb. 20-22 meeting.

Committee members were told the resolution was presented at the 1988 SBC annual meeting, but the Resolutions Committee had not had time to deal with it. The view the hour-long special presented of the controversy in the SBC, subcommittee members said, caused "grave concern" which the Executive Committee should address.

MBMC offers dependency confab

Mississippi Baptist Chemical Dependency Center in Jackson presents its first annual conference on Chemical Dependency on Friday, Oct. 14, at the Ramada Renaissance. The conference will provide new information on assessment, treatment, the disease concept of addiction and con-



Book reviews

Music Reading Made Easy... Easy — Book III; Irene Martin; Church Music Department; Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205; 16 pages; \$1.95; in lots of 15 or more, \$1.75.

This is the last in a series of three books designed to take the non-music reader from where he would be to having enough proficiency in reading music to be able to be a music leader in some cases and to be able to make a definite contribution to any choir in any case.

These books have been written and put together in a way that makes their study fun and at the same time instills the knowledge to make one a music reader. As would be suggested by the title, the books don't pretend to make a finished musician of anyone, but they surely impart a great deal of knowledge that a person unschooled in music would not have.

Book III picks up where Book II leaves the learner and carries him on to somewhat more complicated considerations. For those who have been through the first two books, the third book definitely should not be left undone. By the same token, those who have not moved into any of the books,

Hopewell sets 175th year celebration

Hopewell Church, Franklin County, will celebrate its 175th anniversary, Oct. 23.

Activities will begin at 10 a.m. Morning worship will begin at 11 a.m. The program will include comments from former pastors, and a message by Franklin Haire, former pastor also serving as interim pastor.

Lunch will be served and the afternoon service will consist of special music and a history of the church.

Sherman plans centennial

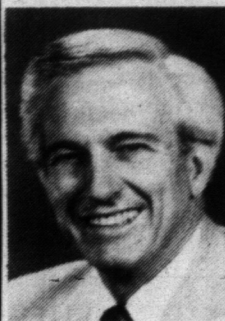
Sherman Church, Sherman, will celebrate its centennial, Oct. 8-9. Beginning at 4 p.m. on Saturday, former pastors will bring comments and reflections interspersed with singing. At 6 p.m. there will be a hamburger supper and a time for fellowship.

Sunday services will be announced by the ringing of the old church bell with Sunday School at 9:45 and morning worship at 11. Maurice Clayton, from Jackson will bring the message. At 12, an old fashioned lunch will be served.

Keith Gann is pastor.

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Carey trustees vote

(Continued from page 3)

Monthly cost of the Gulf Coast campus apartments which are at half occupancy is \$25,000. Said McKay, "Trying to pay around \$25,000 out of the regular budget is very difficult. The lack of occupancy of those apartments has not provided the funds adequate to pay this monthly note. That has stressed the budget."

McKay said the trustees will likely meet Oct. 25 for search committee selection.

Trustees heard reports that the full time equivalent student population of the three Carey campuses: Hattiesburg, Gulfport, and New Orleans, totals 1,293 this term, and that Hazel Portwood of Gulfport will chair the \$400,000 annual fund drive. Trustees also agreed on a new contract with Southern Baptist Hospital to continue the nursing program in New Orleans. In a related matter, the Carey faculty voted in special session on Monday a resolution noting they believe the trustee actions concerning Noonkester's contract denial "may be detrimental to the college."

The four points the faculty resolution gave were:

"The trust and confidence of alumni, the general public, and the Baptist constituency in the stability of the college are jeopardized by not allowing the president to continue with his leadership role and to be involved in the selection of a successor."

"The rejection of the president's proposal on administrative structure comes at an inappropriate time in view of scheduled reaccreditation review by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools."

"The lack of faculty involvement in critical decisions suggests an unwillingness on the part of the board of trustees to communicate and cooperate with the faculty for the purpose of building a better William Carey College."

And "It appears that the board of trustees has acted in neither an ethical nor a professional manner in the dismissal of the president."

Faculty Senate President Obra Quave said most of the faculty attended the meeting and that the ballot vote was "overwhelming" in favor of the resolution. However, he said the group agreed not to release the numbers in the vote.

Global thinking needed for missions strategy

By Jim Newton

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — Directors of missions for more than 200 Baptist associations of churches were challenged to become part of a global missions strategy team during a meeting at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

Bill O'Brien, executive vice president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, issued the challenge during a conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's associational missions division.

O'Brien urged the associational missions directors to become part of a global missions strategy team that crosses denominational lines and programs.

Of the world's 5 billion people, only about one-third — 1.7 billion — consider themselves Christians or members of Christian churches. These 1.7 billion "Christians" earn 62 percent of the world's income, he said.

An additional 2.1 billion people, or 41 percent of the world's population, have had an opportunity to hear the

gospel through churches, missionaries, radio, or printed literature including the Bible, but they have not yet become Christian. These, O'Brien said, have been described as the "evangelized, but not Christianized" people of the world. They earn 23 percent of the world's income.

The rest of the world — more than 1.3 billion people — is unevangelized and has never heard the gospel. Many of these have never even heard of Jesus Christ, O'Brien said. These people, comprising 21 percent of the world's population, earn only 15 percent of the world's income.

He said that Americans give three percent of their income to charitable causes — one percent each to their churches and denominations; one percent to 18,000 para-church or para-denominational organizations; and one percent to secular philanthropic causes.

But of the one percent given to churches and denominations, 99.9 percent is spent on "ourselves," and only 1/100th of 1 percent is spent on pro-

claiming the gospel to the 1.3 billion people who have never heard the gospel, he said.

These 1.3 billion unevangelized people have been categorized into about 3,000 specific population segments, O'Brien said.

About 2,000 of these are people groups who speak languages that have no Bible translations, missionaries who speak their language or churches that appeal to their group. About 500 of these people groups have never heard the name Jesus Christ.

Currently, 252 nations or geopolitical states exist in the world, and 67 of these are restricted or limited-access countries where traditional western missionaries have almost no opportunity to live and serve.

By the year 2000, the number of limited-access countries will increase to 100, O'Brien said. An average of three countries per year are closing their doors to traditional missionaries. By the turn of the century, seven of the 17 largest cities will be Muslim strongholds basically hostile

to the Christian gospel.

"The most shocking fact of all is that 83 percent of the unreached people of the world will be in these 100 limited-access countries," O'Brien said.

In an effort to respond to that challenge, O'Brien said the Foreign Mission Board is creating what it calls the non-resident missionary who will learn the language and culture of people groups within limited-access countries and seek to work with others in trying to proclaim the gospel to those people.

Calling it "one of the most exciting innovations that has come down the track," O'Brien said the board hopes to appoint 10 non-resident missionaries this year, 25 next year, and 300 by the end of the century.

The mission agency also is committed to working with other Christian groups who share Southern Baptists' concern for world evangelization, he added.

Research by FMB consultant David Barrett has revealed 788 plans by

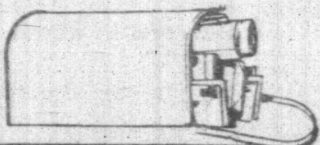
Christian groups to evangelize the world, including 250 such plans that are now operative and 70 plans O'Brien described as mega plans that would be financed by \$40 billion.

Although most people don't realize it, O'Brien said, the world today has shifted from an east-west axis to a north-south axis. The mass of the world's population now lives in the southern hemisphere, where the Christian church is growing most rapidly.

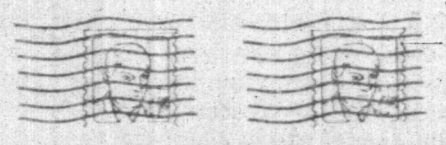
By the year 2000, 100 million Christians will live in South America, and about 350 million Christians will live in Africa. The churches in Africa are growing one and one-half times faster than the population, he said.

In a dialogue period after his two presentations, O'Brien said he did not believe the Southern Baptist Convention would merge its Home and Foreign mission boards into one world mission board in his lifetime. "We're too entrenched for that," he said.

Jim Newton writes for the Home Mission Board.



Letters to the editor



Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld. The withholding of names will be at the discretion of the editor.

Missions in Brazil

Editor:

As I write this letter, Bruce Chennault, Jan Anderson, and I are returning from a Volunteer Evangelism project in the city of Campina Grande, Brazil. I would like to say thank you to the Lord, the SBC, and the MBC, and to the First Baptist Church of Boyle, Miss. for the great opportunity to participate in the great things our Lord is doing throughout his world.

While there, we stayed with missionaries Edd and Freda Trott. Revivals were held in four churches: Peniel, First Baptist, Bodoconga, and Liberdade. There were 192 professions of faith in Christ and approximately 300 other decisions. God used us in a healing work to bring two of these churches back together. One had been infiltrated by 40 young people who desired to make the church a front for the communist party. The other church had been split due to the charismatic influence. We went to do the work of an evangelist but the Lord had other work for us to do as well. We need to learn to "bloom where we are planted."

I have seen the work these missionaries are doing both in Campina Grande and in Itaparanga. In Itaparanga, they are the directors of the Living Water Project. This is a cooperative effort by the SBC, Brazilian Baptists, and the state of Paraiba to break the hunger cycle. Before this project was begun, which is supported by the Cooperative Program, there were people who were starving to death. Burt Sutton, an agriculture missionary who is serving

faithfully there, said that they averaged a murder a week. Since that time, when the project was begun, there have been over 20,000 murders. The Living Water Project is a holistic approach and meets the spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional needs of the people. In the evangelism project sponsored by our Brotherhood Department, we saw 176 people come to Christ last year in Itaparanga. Our missionaries in the area, Burt and Jeannie Sutton, Bruce and Margaret Oliver, and the Trotts, face many hardships to carry the Gospel into these areas where it has never been preached. Last year we went into an area where the Gospel had never been heard and there were 16 people saved. That was a thrill!!

Joe Anderson, pastor
First Church, Boyle

Clarke is alive

Editor:

Despite much information to the contrary, Clarke College is very much alive. Clarke is serving well but does need the assurance of a source of support for its continuation. Clarke is serving a vital need for its present enrollment just as it has done for the past 80 years and just as it will continue to do. Clarke is a valuable asset to Mississippi Baptists because of its quality junior college program and because of its open-door educational policy. How then can our convention elect to let Clarke die?

Does it seem feasible to close a Baptist institution because those in leadership positions did not accurately follow through with convention pro-

ceedings? How can the convention sit back and look at Clarke now and say that because of Clarke's financial condition that it should be closed? The convention has been withdrawing financial support from the college's operation while the college itself is being called upon to maintain its own financial base. Sensible? Is it not possible that Clarke could have regained its financial status if its funding had not been reduced over the past eight years?

Then again, most institutions build on the respect, warmth, and support given to them by various outlets, especially the media. Clarke has not received that allocation. Most of what Baptists in Mississippi have seen recently about Clarke, even that based on fact, has been presented in a definite negative vein. How can any institution attract students when a negative press questions the livelihood of that institution?

But Clarke is here! What the convention will do in November remains to be seen. However, we at Clarke do work on in diligence, trusting that God will ensure our future — what other hope do we have to offer prospective students?

Juanita West
Recruiter, Clarke College

Must continue fight

Editor:

I read with interest your excellent article in SBC TODAY. I wish it could be as you visualized, but it can never be so until the fundamentalists give the rest of us our rightful place in the affairs of the convention. I, for one, will never stop fighting as long as the most devout Christians I have ever known cannot even serve on a committee of the convention. There are millions more of us who feel the same.

Ryburn T. Stancil
Brookhaven

The Last Temptation of Jesus Christ

Editor:

Much has been written and said about the production, release, and distribution of the pornographic movie film, "The Last Temptation of Christ," by Universal Studios of Hollywood, Calif.

The people of Mississippi and the other 49 United States should boycott this motion picture and any other film produced in the future by Universal Studios; also, who should boycott any theatre which shows this pornographic film.

Christian people know the divine personality of Jesus Christ as described in the Holy Bible. Christians understand the LIES about Jesus Christ which this movie portrays. The real victims who view this film will be non-Christians since they will see only the LIES about Christ.

Non-Christians will form negative impressions about Jesus, who taught the human population "to love God and love your fellowman." Christian missionaries will find it more difficult to tell non-Christians who Jesus Christ really is.

I believe Jehovah God will punish those who produced and distributed this pornographic film. A "curse" will be placed upon them as punishment for their sinful acts in misleading non-Christians about the true characteristics of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

It is unfortunate that "the love of money" (filthy lucre) in producing this film is so important to some people. Judas Isariot sold his Lord for 30 pieces of silver but later became a suicide.

God still reigns!

Robert S. Leigh
Jackson

Cut out tags

When I was a young man in the 1940's there were five labels. Tags on groups among the evangelicals were fundamental, conservative, moderate, liberal, and modernist.

Today, somehow, the fundamental and conservative groups are usually labeled the same.

A coalition of moderate, liberal, and modernist wear the same button or tag.

I read that most moderates are really conservatives in theology; but some believe that the liberals and modernists who deny the deity of Christ, the virgin birth of our Lord, and the miracles of Jesus should be allowed to teach in our colleges and seminaries; allowed to preach on foreign fields, and allowed to hold leadership in the convention.

In the political world that would be the same as a man saying, I am a Conservative but I believe in a welfare state, a socialist government, abortion on demand, denying God in our schools and, free housing for everyone.

Ten years ago, the conservatives set out with the idea to get trustees and professors out of key positions who did not appreciate the deity of Christ.

Since then the real issue became confused into personality conflict. This is a tragedy because 90 per cent of born-again "believers," evangelicals of all faith, believe in the basic doctrine about our Savior.

I have talked to people on both sides, and they all seem to love and appreciate Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God. Cut out labels and tags, and let's all get together to glorify our Lord.

Terry R. Fuller
McNeil



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



"God has my number"

A couple of weeks ago, Lois Hicks handed me a letter she'd received from Ken and Ruth Bailey, Mississippians who are missionaries in Bolivia. They were thanking her for working with their daughter, Sonya, and other missionaries' children in Bolivia June 2-10, during annual Mission meeting. "You have a special gift for children," they wrote. "You love them."

Skies over Pass Christian had been greyed by the distant Hurricane Gilbert when I met Mrs. Hicks in a parking lot by the sea. She led me on a zigzag tour of her town as we approached her home on a bayou that empties into the Bay of St. Louis, a stone's throw away.

From where I was seated in her living room, in a yellow chair, on a green carpet, I could see through a wall of glass, and across a deck, the beautiful blending of trees and water and sky. This place was so warmly inviting, I thought, it would be great to stay here all the time!

"Why did you decide to go to Bolivia?" I asked.

"Because God has my number!" replied this gracious and graceful and delightfully candid widow who is a member of the Kittiwake Baptist Church.

She said she had read a book by the title, *God Has My Number*, and had head Mrs. Bryan Brasington give a devotional during mission meeting in Bolivia, referring to a story in that book. The story was about a woman, considering suicide, who called a preacher that she didn't know, in a distant state, in a sort of cry for help. He asked, "How did you know my number?" She answered, "I didn't. A number flashed into my mind, and I dialed it." He knew only God could have thus given her his number.

Mrs. Hicks said that a friend told her that two persons were needed to teach pre-teen MKs in Bolivia last June.

"I prayed about going, but didn't really feel led to go, or to stay home. So I prayed, 'Lord, if you don't want me to go, stop me.'" She went ahead with preparations, ordering passport, and packing. Everything went so smoothly, she felt that indeed God had, through her friend, called her to go.

Another friend gave her an old suitcase in which to pack teaching supplies. She included some old hymnals for the missionaries, and lots of peanut butter and Kool-aid and balloons for the children. "The adults, as well as the kids, enjoyed the peanut butter," she recalled.

She flew to Santa Cruz, which is in a low-lying, tropical area of the landlocked South American country, rather than high in the Andes. There she met the other half of her two-person team — Ruth Harris, a college student from Coral Gables, Florida. And there she stayed in the home of the Suttons, missionaries from Alabama. "I could just step out into the back yard and pick a papaya any time I chose," she said. The front yard, like most others in the city, was walled. Bananas were plentiful. One



Lois Hicks shows a parrot and a flute she bought in Bolivia, both made of wood.

refreshment served to the kids at VBS was bananas dipped in dry Jello. "Try it!" she challenged.

"One thing that especially impressed me is how wonderfully well the missionaries all work together."

On a weekend, they began meeting at a Baptist camp. Later, they met in an English-language school. "The MKs in Bolivia are simply lovely kids," she declared. "They sing beautifully, and of course speak both Spanish and English."

Santa Cruz had been spruced up, she noted, for a recent visit of the Pope. Trees had been whitewashed, head high.

I asked if she'd bought anything in Bolivia. "Not much," she said. "I didn't have time to shop. I spent most of my time with the children, as that was my reason for being there." But she did buy a few things. She stood up and reached for a painted parrot,

made of wood, and a musical instrument, also of wood — a flute, she said it was. She held these against the background of her black cotton shirt-waist dress, which I had already noticed was an attractive contrast with her white hair.

From a mixture of mementoes of other travels — the Holy Land, Australia, New Zealand — she lifted a small fur rug made in Bolivia, with a llama outlined at the center.

Mother of two and grandmother of two, she is a native of New Albany. She planned to visit her 88-year-old mother there soon before leaving for a conference at Green Lake Baptist Assembly in Wisconsin.

"Oh, yes," she said, "I would love to go to Bolivia again — or to another place — on volunteer mission!" When she gets another call, I expect she'll answer it the same way she did the one earlier this year.

Family Ministry plans special leadership training Jan. 13-14

The Family Ministry Section of the Church Training Department will offer three nine-hour leadership training sessions Jan. 13-14, 3 p.m. on the 13th to 3 p.m. on the 14th, at the Baptist Building in Jackson.

"Family Enrichment in Your Church" will be lead by G. Ted Taylor, minister of education, First, Starkville. Carl Dickerson, pastor, Magnolia Avenue, Laurel, will be the facilitator for the "Covenant Marriage" sessions and Billy G. Johnson, pastor, Dixie Church, Hattiesburg, will be the resource person for "Parenting by Grace."

The sessions will be given simultaneously with leadership course accreditation. The registration

fee for each course is \$25.00 per person or \$40.00 per couple, including two meals and materials. Motel arrangements can be made at special rates if desired.

The Family Enrichment sessions will be limited to 75; Covenant Marriage will be limited to 40; potential leader couples. Parenting by Grace will be limited to 30 persons.

To make application, send name, address, name of church and association, and name of the course in which you desire to enroll. Send registration fee to Family Ministry, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. Make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Deadline for enrollment is Dec. 1.

Thursday, October 6, 1988

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

Ministry team available at William Carey College

Baptist Student Union at William Carey College has four ministry teams available for youth rallies, revivals, associational meetings, church services, or other programs.

Teams consist of a preacher, song leader, pianist, soloist, and other support students. Each preacher and song leader is a ministerial student training for full-time Christian voca-

tional service.

Teams are available on a "love offering" basis. All money will go toward the BSU summer missions goal.

For more information, contact Frank Bowers, Director of Religious Activities, William Carey College, Hattiesburg, MS 39401 or (601) 582-6113.

Devotional

Christianity or religiosity

By John W. Wade, Sr.

John 3:3 — Romans 2:28; 10:1-4

A statement that is heard from the mouth of the unredeemed is: "If that's Christianity, I don't need it" or "My morals and life are purer than those who claim salvation."

There is "Christianity" and there is "religiosity" or "churchanity." The difference in these experiences is unbelievable! Christianity is a new birth, a new creation from the inbreathed breath of our God through Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit. Yes, the spiritual infusion of the shed blood of the paschal Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, into our sin-cleansed soul causes a total and complete change in our total being. People will take notice of the fact we are walking with Jesus!

In institutionalized "churchanity" today there is something very wrong or lacking when only slightly more than half of American teenagers attend church weekly, and while 40 percent of American adults attend regularly, according to recent Gallup surveys. A highlight of the study is the finding that married people under 40 with children are twice as likely as young couples without children to attend church. To maintain the 50 percent attendance of teenagers requires constant special programs and entertainment or a near collapse of the Christian moral code.

Beloved, through the heart of the apostle John, Jesus states: "And hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God reflected; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked." In Christ only is there Christianity — blood-washed, blood-bought, born-again sinners.

Wade is pastor, Bond Church, Wiggins.

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Milam

Price

Three students with Mississippi ties recently received academic scholarships from Midwestern Seminary,

Kansas City, Mo., for 1988-89. They include Joey Butler, William Milam, and William "Tommy" Price.

Butler received a \$1,500 scholarship from the seminary as a master of divinity-correlated student. He is a native of Laurel.

Milam was awarded a \$2,000 scholarship from the seminary as a master of divinity-correlated student. He considers Indianola his hometown. He is the son of Litha Cobb of Crowder.

Price, a master of divinity student at Midwestern, received \$750 from the "Betty Seats Memorial Scholarship." He considers Greenville, Miss., his hometown.

Bennie R. Crockett Jr., chair of the Department of Religion and associate professor at William Carey College, is the author of "The Function of Mathetological Prayer in Mark," published in the June issue of Irish Biblical Studies.

The Builders' class of the Sunday School of First Church, Drew, honored retired Deacon Ewell Walker on his 91st birthday. Walker was ordained as deacon in 1923 at Sunflower Plantation Baptist Church now known as Bethany Baptist Church. Three of Walker's six children were present to help him celebrate. They were Mrs. Nannette Shaw, Clarksdale, Mrs. Shirley Smith, and 'Jabo' Walker of Drew. His other children are Pierce Walker, Jackson, Mrs. Virginia Williams, Oxford, and Lee Hugh Walker, Utica.

HATTIESBURG — Diane Dobson Jamison has been named director of student activities at William Carey College.



Jamison

She was graduated from Carey in 1976 with a degree in music education.

She has directed the Forrest County Junior Miss Program for seven years and has served as treasurer of the Hattiesburg Civic Light Opera for five years. She has appeared in several HCLO productions.

Jamison, a church organist and pianist, is a member of the American Guild of Organists and the Hattiesburg Music Club. She is beginning a second term as vice president of District III of the Mississippi Federation of Music Clubs.

She worked at First Mississippi National Bank of Hattiesburg for eight years and has been an aerobics instructor at the Institute for Wellness and Sports Medicine.

Barney Walker dies in Jackson

Taylorsville native, Barney W. Walker Sr., 93, died in Jackson Oct. 1. He was retired from the ministry where he had served 55 years. He was pastor of Temple Church, Jackson, and served churches in Tunica, Forest, Poplarville, and Hollandale.

Survivors include his wife, Norma; daughters, Valda Miller of Jackson, and Martha Stoeltzing of Olathe, Kans.; sons, Barney Walker Jr. of Houston, Tex., and Pat Walker of Memphis; 17 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the Baptist Children's Village or Broadmoor Church, Jackson's, library fund.

Alex Abercrombie dies

Funeral services for Alex N. Abercrombie, 84, of Collins, were held Sept. 10, at Willow Grove Baptist Church, Covington County, where he was a member.

Abercrombie was licensed by Cold Springs Baptist Church and was ordained by Grace Memorial Baptist Church in Gulfport at the request of Ora Baptist Church, March 18, 1941.

Abercrombie served as pastor-at Ora, Cold Springs, New Hope, Mt. Horeb, Willow Grove, and Union North in Covington County. He also served as Harmontown and Union in Oxford, Union Baptist Church in Como, Bethlehem, and Lawn Haven in Laurel.

He was survived by his wife, Mrs. Olivia Fairchild Abercrombie.

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Homecomings

First, Stonewall: Oct. 9; Eddie Davidson, preaching; Ricky McPhearson, leading the singing; dinner will be served in fellowship hall after morning services; Albert H. McMullen, pastor.

McAdams, Kosciusko: Oct. 9; 139th year; noon meal following worship services; 1:30, concert by Kathy Maze, Woodland Hills, Jackson.

Mt. Vernon (Leflore): Oct. 9, worship, 11 a.m.; Allen Robinson, guest speaker; dinner on the ground at noon; singing in the afternoon.

Clear Branch (Rankin): Oct. 9; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; Greg Johnston, former music

director, now serving Union, Tyler-town, guest speaker; covered dish luncheon in Family Life Center; 1:15 singing in the afternoon led by Sammy McDonald, Carmel, Monticello, and special music by The Harmony Trio and the Christian Praise Ladies Trio.

Damascus, Flora (Madison): Oct. 9; Sunday school, 10 a.m.; morning worship, 11; dinner at noon in education building; afternoon singing; William (Sonny) Bradshaw, pastor.

Flag Chapel, Jackson: Oct. 9; homecoming and annual progress day; James Pugh, former pastor, guest speaker at 11 a.m. worship service; dinner served in fellowship hall; after dinner, singing and a report of the progress the church has made during the past year under its new pastor, Dexter Truesdell.

Briar Hill, Florence, will celebrate 100th

Briar Hill Church, Florence, will celebrate its centennial on Oct. 9. Sunday School will be at 10 a.m. with men ordained to the ministry by the church returning to teach adult and youth classes. At the 11 a.m. service a former pastor will preach. There will be a noon meal. The afternoon service will be a sharing time with former pastors and men ordained to the ministry by the church. A brief history will also be given. Wilson Winstead is pastor.

Revival dates

First, Lucedale: Oct. 9-14; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Jerry Drace, Jacksonville, Fla., evangelist; Ken and Lois Holland, music evangelist; John L. Walker, pastor.

Courtland (Panola): Oct. 9-13; Sunday services, 11 a.m. and 6:45 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Trent Grubbs, evangelist; Archie Blair, music; Billy J. McDaniel, pastor.

Lizana, Gulfport: Oct. 9-12; John D. Wilton, evangelist; Brian Pannell, Barton, Lucedale, music; services, 11 a.m. Sunday and 7 p.m. nightly; Gerald H. Walker, pastor.

Just for the Record

Thursday, October 6, 1988

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9



New Hebron Church, New Hebron, recently had GA Recognition, Mother-Daughter Banquet, and Mission Adventures Award presentation. GA director is Lynn Morris and GA leaders are Cindy Daughdrill and Glenda Westmoreland.

Pictured, left to right, front row, are Shelley Daughdrill, Suzette Slater, Jessica Morris, Mindy Bishop, Anya Stephens; Jamie Chavis, Christy Nuckles, and Candi Lord. Second row, Ashley Morris, Suzanne Berry, Cassandra Lee, and Emily Little. Not pictured were Melissa Buckley, Kim Sharp, and Mandy Russell.



Twenty-four members of **Clarke College Baptist Student Union** attended their first retreat for the 1988-89 school year at Central Hills Retreat, Kosciusko, Sept. 9 and 10. Guest speaker was Paul Jones executive director, Christian Action Commission, MBCB. Activities included campfire and share time, canoeing, horseback riding, and adventure course hiking. J. B. Costilow, BSU director and James Read, dean, Clarke College, accompanied the students.



GAs of **Bethany Church, Prentiss**, were honored at a Mother-Daughter luncheon in the home of Sharon Dungan, WMU director. The food was prepared by the ladies of the Baptist Young Women, which included a birthday cake marking 100 years for WMU. The girls sang, "Happy Birthday" to celebrate this event. Pictured, left to right, are GAs and their Mission Adventure badge number that they accomplished during the year, Tiffany Ward - 1; Megan Miller - 1; Summer Hall - 5; Melissa McPhail - 4; Tracy Roers - 2; and Lacy Taylor - 2. The leaders are Dorothy Chance and Joyce Hall. Also attending the luncheon was the pastor's wife Mrs. Martha Jones.

Mississippi Baptist activities

- Oct. 9 World Hunger Day (CAC Emphasis)
- Oct. 10 Regional Growth Whistlestop; FBC, McComb; 7-9:30 p.m. (SS)
- Oct. 11 Regional Growth Whistlestop; FBC, Hattiesburg; 7-9:30 p.m. (SS)
- Oct. 12 Regional Growth Whistlestop; Bel-Aire BC, Gulfport; 9:30 a.m.-Noon (SS)
- Oct. 13 Regional Growth Whistlestop; Calvary BC, Pascagoula; 7-9:30 p.m. (SS)
- Oct. 14-15 Key Leader Seminar; Baptist Building; 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (CT)
- Oct. 14-15 BYW Retreat; Camp Garaywa; 6 p.m., 14th-12:30 p.m. 15th (WMU)
- Oct. 14-15 Baptist Nursing Fellowship Retreat; Camp Garaywa; 6 p.m., 14th-2:30 p.m., 15th (WMU)
- Oct. 14-15 Camp Garaywa Staff Reunion; Camp Garaywa; 6 p.m., 14th-12:30 p.m., 15th (WMU)

The deacons of **Monticello Church, Monticello**, have recently completed a three-month project to visit every resident church family. The twelve men visited in over 200 homes during this time period as part of the Deacon Family Ministry Plan.

All deacons reported that they felt they had received the greater blessing from the visits made.

Quarterly training sessions have also been conducted to better equip the deacons and wives in ministry skills. Giving through the regular church budget also increased 20 percent over the same three-month period of the previous year. The Deacon Family Ministry coordinator is Rob Robbins. James Fancher is pastor.

A group from **Swiftwater Church, Greenville** and their pastor, Alva Ray McCorkle, recently took a three day trip to Eureka Springs, Ark. to see "The Passion Play." The church also had an Old Fashioned Sunday with members dressed in proper attire.



Phillip Duncan, left, pastor of **Wallerville Church, New Albany**, and Newell H. Cornelius, church member, stand before the church building which has a new steeple. The steeple was given by Cornelius as a memorial to his wife, Byrd Cornelius, who died in 1987. Cornelius has been a member of Wallerville Church since 1922.

Harvest Day will be held at **Wiggins Church, Leake Association**, Oct. 16. There will be regular Sunday morning services. There will not be a night service. Carlton Jones is pastor.

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Fairview, Columbus, to sponsor singles meeting

Fairview Church, Columbus, is sponsoring an areawide Single Adult Conference Oct. 21-22 beginning at 7 p.m. on Friday and concluding Saturday after lunch.

John Dees, director of single adults, Whitesburg Church, Huntsville, Ala., will lead three periods of Bible study and lead a conference on "Purity in the Life of the Believer."

Rose Anne Coleman, Chris-

tian Singer, Nashville, Tenn., will lead the Praise Time and bring special music. She will also lead a conference on "Secrets of a Happy Christian Hairstyle."

Registration is \$10.00 per person and should be mailed to Fairview Baptist Church, 127 Airline Road, Columbus, MS 39702. Call Sammy Crawford, minister of education, for more information phone 328-2924.

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Isaiah, willing volunteer, says, "Here am I, send me"

By Robert Earl Shirley
Isaiah 6



Shirley

Although many people substitute a moment of emotional upheaval for an encounter with God, it is also true that many people are led to surrender their lives fully to God only when a severe crisis situation makes them fully conscious of the need. Isaiah tells us that it was in the year that his royal relative, Judah's great King Uzziah, died that he had a vision of God in the temple. One can imagine his emotional turmoil as he went there for comfort. A kinsman had been taken away, his leader had fallen, and Judah was going through a time of change both politically and spiritually.

In his vision, Isaiah was permitted a view of the heavenly temple with the Lord sitting high and lifted up. Uzziah's throne might be empty, but Jehovah was still reigning in heaven. Around his throne, there stood seraphim. These

had six wings. Two of their wings indicated one's unworthiness to look on God by covering their face, two others one's unworthiness to stand in his presence by covering their feet, and two were used for flying. One recalls how Moses was to remove his shoes in God's presence before the burning bush and how Paul fell to earth before his heavenly visitation. The seraphim sang antiphonally saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts," focusing the prophet's attention completely on God.

In the presence of God, Isaiah was forced to view his life in a true light. Burdened down with a feeling of guilt regarding his own personal sin and that of his nation, he cried out that he himself was a man of unclean lips and that the people among whom he dwelt shared his sin. It is easy for one today to feel complacent about his life if his standard is that of the other people around him. On the other hand, if his standard is the life of Christ, he, too, must cry, "Forgive me, Lord, for I am undone." Those who

hesitate to serve God today because of their background or because they still feel themselves unworthy should observe what happened when Isaiah sincerely confessed his sin. The seraphim touched his lips with a burning coal from the altar and purified them and pronounced his sin forgiven. The Christian knows that the penalty for our sins was paid on Calvary's cross and Christ gave the assurance that all sins would be forgiven that were surrendered to him.

It is not surprising that when Isaiah got his heart right with God and the sin in his life taken care of, that God would have a place of service ready for him to assume. There is no place for the idle Christian today. Christ said to his disciples, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." Thus, Isaiah heard the voice of God saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" It was not necessary for God to use conscription. Isaiah was ready and quickly responded, "Here am I; send me."

It is possible that Isaiah may have served as a prophet prior to this time, but if so, he had been limited in his preaching and witnessing by the presence of undesirable qualities in his

life. Now he had fervent enthusiasm that resulted from a new and exhilarating experience with God. He also had a personal testimony to share concerning the nature and glory of God that he had never had before. He who might have once felt himself a hypocrite in the denunciation of sin could henceforth speak out forcibly in the name of the Lord. He could testify to those who were still struggling with temptation and the weight of guilt as he had done and assure them that genuine worship, sincere prayer, and a personal experience with God was the answer to their need.

This is even more obvious today as we consider the words of Christ and his sacrifice for us on the cross. Forgiveness is offered to all who will receive it. A new nature belongs to all who will let Christ cleanse from sin and give newness of life. One does not have to remain afraid, unhappy, with their lives empty today. Christ will fill that heart and take away the fear. Each person can be of service. Christ can use each dedicated volunteer. One has but to say with true conviction, "Here am I, Lord; send me."

Shirley is pastor emeritus, Parkway, Tupelo.

Moses responds to God's call

By Frank H. Thomas Jr.
Exodus 3:11-7:13



Thomas

Moses responded to God's call by questioning the appropriateness of the call and the appropriateness of him as a person to respond to this call. He felt a sense of inadequacy for the task as many of us do when challenged by God to respond to his will. In response to the hesitations of Moses, God gave him a sign that the people would serve or worship God on this mountain which would be the Holy Mountain or Mount Horeb at which Moses had received the call.

The objections of Moses included his belief that the people would not believe his word. Who was he to speak to them? He had been raised in Egypt, educated in Egypt, cast out of Egypt, married into a Midianite family, and had children by a Midianite woman. How could he possibly be an authentic witness of God to the Hebrews?

Another objection had to do with the authority of Moses. Perhaps this has to do with an authentication of his call by means of some kind of wonders or signs. It was in response to this objection that God urged Moses to throw down his rod which then became a serpent.

When Moses picked up the serpent, it became a rod again.

Yet a third objection had to do with Moses not knowing the name of God. How could he tell the people that God had sent him if in fact he didn't even know God's name? In response, God revealed his name as "I am who I am."

And a fourth objection had to do with Moses' perception that he was not an eloquent man. Nevertheless, God provided for him in his lack of eloquence. Aaron, his brother, would be a mouthpiece. With these answers to his objections, Moses went back to his father-in-law and informed Jethro of his decision to return to Egypt. He did so ostensibly with the blessing of his father-in-law.

When Moses returned to Egypt, he and Aaron went to the pharaoh and spoke the word of the Lord to the Egyptian ruler. "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness." Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to let the people go. As a matter of fact, he simply increased the oppression and the burdens of the Lord's people. The taskmasters demanded more of the workers who were building the buildings for the pharaoh. Instead of providing the straw to make bricks, they forced the people to gather their straw, make the

bricks, and keep a high level of productivity. The pharaoh had understood Moses' request to be a sign of indolence of laziness by the Hebrew people.

The response of the Hebrews to Moses was a negative response. They saw that the taskmasters only increased their oppression in response to the request by Moses to let them go. Instead of lightening their oppression, Moses had made it even heavier. Therefore, the Hebrews rejected Moses' leadership and God's assurance at first.

Moses turned to the Lord again in 5:22 and remonstrated with the Lord about his call once again. He remonstrated with the Lord about the evil done to his people. Why had the Lord ever sent Moses to begin with? Instead of accomplishing what he had set out to do, he had caused the pharaoh to intensify the burdens against the Lord's people. The response of the Lord to Moses' complaint that his leadership was rejected was that now Moses would see what the Lord would do to Pharaoh. It would be with a strong hand that Moses would lead God's people out of the land of Egypt.

In chapter 6, the genealogies of Moses and Aaron are listed. Most commentators would suggest that the presence of this genealogy authenticates Moses and Aaron as viable leaders of the Lord's people, called by the Lord. God's promise to his people to be their god and

to bring them to a land of promise was the reiteration of the covenant which originally had been made with them. Therefore, the Lord sent Moses in to Pharaoh again and asked him to let the people go. Then when Moses remonstrated that the pharaoh had refused to let them go, the Lord asked Moses to go back to Pharaoh and tell him that the Lord had commanded him to let God's people go. Moses was to prove himself by throwing down his rod before Pharaoh that it might become a serpent. Moses did this, and the magicians of the Pharaoh matched this wonder. Then when the serpent of Moses swallowed the serpents of the magicians of the pharaoh, yet another miracle had been accomplished. The power of God had been revealed. Nevertheless, the heart of Pharaoh remained hardened against the Lord God.

It is interesting that this assignment of leadership came to a man who was 80 years old, and to his brother who was 83 years old. These new responsibilities had come to these old campaigners and old warriors. Nevertheless, they had accepted the call of God, not understanding all that was involved, and went to Egypt to the pharaoh asking him to let God's people go. I suppose that the Lord's challenge continues to come to us in various forms no matter what might be our age.

Frank Thomas is pastor, Alta Woods, Jackson.

Saved from what and how?

By Steve Odom

Acts 9:3-6, 17-18; Ephesians 2:8-10

It was 15 years ago now. I was attending a junior college in Mississippi. My roommate was a good friend from my hometown. We had known each other for years.



Odom

Something was happening on that small campus that year. People were slowly beginning to talk openly about what it means to be a Christian.

A planned campus revival and an unplanned mass religious awakening had most of the campus wondering

what in the world was going on. No one had an explanation for what we were seeing happen in the lives of people we never dreamed would embrace anything even remotely related to Christianity.

In the middle of such a surprising atmosphere, one day my roommate asked me what it means to be saved. "Saved from what?" he asked. Well, the stock answer is, "Saved from sin." But I knew that would hardly even begin to answer his question. So we explored what he thought he might need to be saved from. He

LIFE AND WORK

decided then and there that salvation was something he needed. He accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior and the change in his life has been obvious ever since.

Maybe what we are saved from is not the only aspect of what it means to be saved by God. Thankfully, we are saved from self-centered living which, in the end, is self-destructive. But salvation is more than escape. It is also fulfillment. That is, it is the beginning of a process that moves us toward being whole human beings under God.

It is a process by which we learn to trust God fully so that, whatever happens, we know we will be ultimately safe. So we are saved from despair, from terror, from loneliness, from being finally defeated by anything that can happen.

Paul the Apostle seems to have been one person who felt that the only thing he needed to be saved from was Christianity! The first two verses of Acts, chapter nine, tell us that Saul of Tarsus (Paul's pre-conversion name) was threatening the followers of Christ with murder.

The next 17 verses give an account of a miraculous conversion in which Saul of Tarsus, persecuted of Christians, became Paul the Apostle, leader of Christians. This event in Paul's life has been called the Damascus Road experience. It is a demonstration of the two basic elements of a salvation experience with God: grace and faith.

There are some aspects of Paul's conversion that we should be careful not to make normative for all salvation experiences. For instance, how many of us were called to attention by a frightening, flashing light from heaven (Acts 9:3-4)?

How many of us were addressed by a voice that people around us could hear, too, but no one could see anyone speaking (Acts 9:5-7)? How many of us in our blinded condition from the bright light was greeted by a stranger who touched us, told us who was behind the voice on the road, and then suddenly we found we could see again (Acts 9:17-18)?

Yet, there are two overwhelming aspects of Paul's experience, even more overwhelming than these strange occurrences, that are normative to all Christian conversion experiences. They are the experience of grace and the ex-

perience of faith.

Paul would talk later in his letters to first-century churches about how futile his religious efforts were to bring him salvation (e.g., Philippians 3:4-10). Then he would talk about what is the one source of our salvation: the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Salvation is a gift from God that cannot be earned or deserved and, therefore, cannot be used for self-glorification or the exclusion of others. God's grace is available to all persons through Jesus Christ, and if anyone is excluded from that grace, it is the work of human beings, not the work of God.

Ephesians 2:8-10 is clear about God's gift of grace and our response of faith. When we accept such an overwhelming gift, we do so by faith which is a complete trust in God's ability to keep us in his care.

We then demonstrate how such faith is life-changing by living out what we believe in tangible ways. We are saved from self-destruction for self-fulfillment, a salvation that comes to us through God's grace in Jesus Christ, a salvation that becomes our very own when we demonstrate our faith in God.

Steve Odom is pastor, University, Hattiesburg.

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(To be continued)

THE BAPTIST CHILDREN'S VILLAGE GIVES THANKS FOR ALL ASSOCIATIONAL LEADERSHIP

As of 9-30-88 The Village has been invited to send a representative to the following associational meetings.

DATE	CHURCH	ASSOCIATION
October 10	FBC, Clinton	Hinds-Madison
October 10	North Ripley	Tippah
October 11	Central, Golden	Tishomingo
October 11	Beulah, Lexington	Holmes
October 11	Crystal Springs BC	Walthall
October 17	Thrasher BC	Prentiss
October 17	Wheeler Grove BC	Alcorn
October 17	Trinity BC	Itawamba
October 17	Shubuta BC	Clarke
October 17	Forest BC	Scott
October 18	Poplar Springs	Newton
October 18	FBC, Guntown	Lee
October 18	Christ, Greenwood	Leflore
October 18	FBC, Boyle	Bolivar
October 18	Bluff Springs	Benton
October 18	Bethel	Copiah
October 18	D'Lo BC	Simpson
October 19	Locust Grove BC	Union County
October 20	West Heights BC	Pontotoc
October 20	Immanuel BC	Warren
October 21	Rocky Creek	George
October 21	Mount Moriah BC	Lincoln
October 24	Bethlehem BC	Yazoo
October 24	FBC, Nesbit	Northwest
October 24	Parks BC	Tallahatchie
October 27	FBC, Carthage	Leake

World Mission Conference leads to mission trip to Erie

Five men, six women, and three children from Mt. Vernon Baptist Church (Lauderdale) drove 2,200 miles to Erie, Penn. to lead a five-day Vacation Bible School at Open Bible Baptist Church.

Mt. Vernon's first contact with Open Bible began last year when their pastor, George Ratz, came to the Lauderdale County World Mission Conferences. The church was so impressed with Ratz's mission work that they invited him to lead a revival last fall. It was then that Ratz invited the church to come lead a Bible School for his mission church. Ratz, a native of Poland and a Southern Baptist Home

missionary, said his church had only had two previous Bible Schools.

More than \$2,100 was received through fund-raising projects and donations to send the team. Many used their vacation weeks to go on the mission. This was Mt. Vernon's first mission trip.

The Sunday night service was conducted by various members of Mt. Vernon. Their pastor, Charles Davis preached that night. After the service, the members walked the area neighborhoods visiting and inviting the prospects to Bible School. The total enrollment for the week was 64

with 14 faculty, and 50 children. About 80 percent of the children, ages three through 12th grade, were prospects for the church. The absentee rate was low; the children were lined up 30 minutes early each morning waiting for the school to begin.

Family Night was held Thursday with the parents attending the special service. The children sang and told what they had learned that week. Most of the parents are prospects too.

The neighborhood of Open Bible is mixed with many ethnic groups, with Polish descent being the most prominent.



This is the Mt. Vernon mission group which traveled to Erie, Penn. From left they are: front row, Rusty Dearing, Royce Dearing; second row, Anita Dearing, Agnes Davis, Joann Kimbrell, Alton Kimbrell, Cheryl Ann Whitehead, Suzy Nelson; back row, Roy Dearing, Bobby Winham, Pearline Reed, Charles Davis, Courtney Nelson, and William Nelson.

Home mission offering gifts may tally lowest increase in 18 years

By Joe Westbury

ATLANTA (BP) — Gifts to the Southern Baptist Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions may record their lowest increase in nearly two decades if the current giving trend is not reversed, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis told the agency's executive committee.

Mississippi ranked seventh in the amount given to the offering through August. As of Aug. 31, Mississippi Baptists had given \$1,653,391 through the Annie Armstrong offering. This was decrease of \$58,600 or 3.42 percent compared to the same period in 1987.

In addition to the report on missions giving, board members elected a Californian as associate director in the metropolitan missions depart-

ment and appointed 31 missionaries during their Sept. 13 meeting.

Lewis told the directors if contributions continue at the present rate for the remainder of the year, the board will receive an estimated \$30.4 million, or 81 percent of the 1988 goal of \$37.5 million.

The projection would be an increase of only \$151,000, or one-half of 1 percent, compared to the previous year's increase of 8.8 percent. The marginal gain would be the lowest increase in Annie Armstrong offering giving since 1970, when the offering dropped 1.6 percent, Lewis noted.

"I'm grateful to God and to Southern Baptists for the projected increase. But I'm deeply concerned that the increase would not even keep up

with our 4.5 percent inflation rate, and that the projection is \$7.1 million below the goal," he told committee members.

Lewis noted that during the past 15 years, gifts through the special offering have increased an average of 11.3 percent, or 5.15 percent when adjusted for inflation. The annual offering for home missions has not reached the goal since 1981.

Reasons for the trend cannot yet be determined, Lewis said, but he added, early returns from the denomination's 10 largest-giving states have not kept up with inflation or last year's percentage increase. "What happens in these 10 key states determines giving trends for the entire denomination," he said.

At this time last year, the top 10 states in giving reported an increase of 10 percent, but current figures for the same time period show this year's receipts running at only 0.36 percent.

Of the top 10 states, six reported increases and four reported decreases, Lewis said. Kentucky posted the largest percentage gain with 5.71 percent, while slight increases were registered by Florida, South Carolina,

Georgia, Texas and Virginia.

The four leading states reporting decreases were Mississippi, Tennessee, North Carolina and Alabama.

Lewis pointed out an average nationwide increase of 28 percent will be required to reach the \$39 million offering goal in 1989. He then urged the board members to do better than the average and set a good example by challenging their churches to increase giving by 50 percent.

In his report to the board, Lewis also briefed executive committee members on the Home Mission Board's efforts to distribute copies of the Gospel of John to people who attend the movie "The Last Temptation of Christ."

Lewis reported the board is making available free copies of the Gospel of John to Baptist associations where the movie is playing. He urged board members to get involved in a positive witness to people who see the controversial film.

"I believe Christians ought to be at every theater where this movie is showing — not to see the movie, but to witness personally to the people who do," Lewis said.

In other business, Ellis Caswell Pitman, director of missions for Gold Coast Baptist Association in Oxnard, Calif., was elected assistant director in the metropolitan missions department.

The new position was created to enable the board to better coordinate its strategies in evangelizing major metropolitan cities in the western United States.

Pitman, who will maintain his residence in suburban Los Angeles, will be the department representative for 13 western states, including Alaska, Hawaii and Western Canada. Nine of the 11 cities with more than 1 million population targeted for evangelism in the region are located in California.

A native of Lancaster County, S.C., Pitman was pastor or assistant pastor of California churches from 1966 to 1983. He has been director of missions for Gold Coast Association for five years.

Directors also appointed 13 missionaries, two missionary associates and 16 church planter apprentices.

Faith professions increase at BSSB assemblies

NASHVILLE (BP) — Attendance and public decisions made during Summer Youth Celebration conferences this year at Ridgecrest (N.C.) and Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist conference centers increased slightly over 1987 totals.

Of the 4,403 who attended the conferences in June, 1,397 decisions for Christ were made, reported Clyde Hall, manager of the youth section in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department, sponsor of the event. Last year, some 4,000 young people attended the youth conferences, and 1,165 decisions were made.

Of the 1,853 young people who attended the youth celebration at Glorieta, 709 made public decisions. Of those decisions, 152 were professions of faith, 425 were rededications, 57 were church-related vocations, and 75 were other types of decisions.

About 2,550 young people attended the Ridgecrest conference, where 79 made professions of faith, 506 rededicated their lives, 32 pledged to enter full-time church-related service, and 71 made other types of decisions.

Mission trip finds children receptive

"Heaven won't take me, and hell's afraid I'm comin'" was one of many responses encountered by a team of Baptist youths and adults who recently conducted a door to door survey of 500 residents living near Watertown, New York.

In addition, the team of six youths and four adults from Dumas Baptist Church conducted Backyard Bible Clubs and worked in a Vacation Bible School for the Long Falls Baptist Church in Carthage, New York.

Harry Maples, pastor of the host church, said that the team performed a vital service for his small growing congregation of 60 members.

"Teams like yours save us literally months of work and enable us to locate interested persons for us to meet with," Maples said. "In the early 19th century, New York was full of evangelical, gospel-preaching churches — but no more. The need to start new churches is great in this part of the country."

Team members from Dumas found that only one out of every hundred persons interested in attending a Bible Study. However, the children were extremely receptive to learning about Jesus Christ.

The team travelled more than 3,000

miles and saw such sights as Niagara Falls, Sacket Harbor, the Thousand Islands area of the St. Lawrence Seaway, and Kingston, Ontario.



A mission team from Dumas Church traveled recently to Watertown and Carthage, N.Y. Pictured in the group photo are (l to r): Gail Pucik, Penny Drewery, Laura Pucik, Harry Maples (host pastor), Shawn Davis, David Pucik, Tammy Drewery, Sidra Davis, Peggy Davis, Von Jeanes, Tammy Davis, Karen Flake, and Rachael Pucik. Not pictured is Don Pucik, pastor of Dumas Church.

Baptist Record

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NASHVILLE TN 37203

Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

October 6, 1988